

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

Notice of Inventory Completion for Native American Human Remains and Associated Funerary Objects from the Titicut Site in Bridgewater, MA in the Possession of the Robert S. Peabody Museum of Archaeology, Andover, MA

AGENCY: National Park Service, Interior

ACTION: Notice

Notice is hereby given in accordance with provisions of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, 25 U.S.C. 3003(d), of completion of the inventory of human remains and associated funerary objects, presently in the possession of the Robert S. Peabody Museum of Archaeology, Phillips Academy, Andover, MA, from the Titicut Site in Bridgewater, MA.

A detailed inventory and assessment of these human remains has been made by the Robert S. Peabody Museum of Archaeology. Human remains of one individual, a ten to twelve year old female, were recovered in 1947 from the Titicut site. This site is believed to have been occupied for several thousand years prior to European Contact. The human remains were recovered with glass and shell beads, a felsite biface, an iron axe, awl, and knife handle, a large ceramic vessel, several antler spoons and hafts, and several whelk shells. The burial can be dated between 1600 and 1620, based on the European trade items recovered with the individual. This site is located within the aboriginal territory of the Wampanoag Tribe at the time of European contact.

Based on the available archaeological and ethnohistorical evidence, as well as the geographical and oral tradition of the Wampanoag people, officials of the Robert S. Peabody Museum have determined that pursuant to 25 U.S.C. 3001(2), there is a relationship of shared group identity which can be reasonably traced between these human remains and associated funerary objects from the Titicut Site and the Wampanoag people. The nearest group of identifiable Wampanoag people are located in Mashpee, MA. The Federally recognized Gay Head Wampanoag concur that Mashpee is the closest community of Wampanoag people to be identified with the Titicut Site. However, the Mashpee Wampanoag are not recognized as eligible for the special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians.

Since the Mashpee Wampanoag are not Federally-recognized, the Robert S. Peabody Museum included these remains and associated funerary objects on an inventory of "culturally unidentifiable" human remains and requested the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act Review Committee's recommendation as to their disposition.

On December 21, 1994, officials of the Robert S. Peabody Museum were formally notified of the recommendation from the Review Committee stating that, "(A)fter careful consideration of the evidence provided in your letter and in testimony at their most recent meeting, the Review Committee recommends that the Robert S. Peabody Museum of Archaeology proceed to repatriate the above mentioned human remains and associated funerary objects to the Mashpee Wampanoag."

This notice has been sent to officials of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe. Representatives of any other Indian tribe which believes itself to be culturally affiliated with these human remains and associated funerary objects should contact James W. Bradley, Director of the Robert S. Peabody Museum of Archaeology, Phillips Academy, Andover, MA 01810; telephone: (508) 749-4490, before March 17, 1995. Repatriation of these human remains and associated funerary objects to the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe may begin after that date if no additional claimants come forward.

Dated: February 9, 1995

Francis P. McManamon
Departmental Consulting Archeologist,
Chief, Archeological Assistance Division
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